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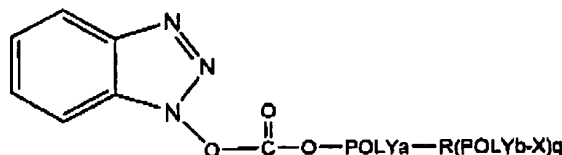
Amendments to the Claims:

1-30 (Cancelled)

31. (Currently Amended) A method for the preparation of a 1-benzotriazolylcarbonate ester of a water-soluble and non-peptidic polymer, comprising:

providing a water-soluble and non-peptidic polymer having at least one terminal hydroxyl group, the polymer having the structure HO-POLY_a-R(POLY_b-X)_q, wherein POLY_a and POLY_b are water-soluble and non-peptidic polymer backbones that may be the same or different, R is a central core molecule selected from a polyol or an amino acid, q is an integer from 2 to about 300, and each X is a capping group; and

reacting the terminal hydroxyl group of the water-soluble and non-peptidic polymer with di(1-benzotriazolyl)carbonate to form a 1-benzotriazolylcarbonate ester of the water-soluble and non-peptidic polymer having the structure:



32. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 31, wherein each water-soluble and non-peptidic polymer backbone is selected from the group consisting of poly(alkylene glycol), poly(oxyethylated polyol), poly(olefinic alcohol), poly(vinylpyrrolidone), poly(hydroxypropylmethacrylamide), poly(α -hydroxy acid), poly(vinyl alcohol), polyphosphazene, polyoxazoline, poly(N-acryloylmorpholine), and copolymers, terpolymers, and mixtures thereof.

33. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 31, wherein POLY_a and POLY_b are poly(ethylene glycol).

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34. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 33, wherein POLYa and POLYb each have an average molecular weight from about 200 Da to about 100,000 Da.

35. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 31, wherein each X is independently selected from the group consisting of alkoxy, hydroxyl, protected hydroxyl, active ester, active carbonate, acetal, aldehyde, aldehyde hydrates, alkenyl, acrylate, methacrylate, acrylamide, active sulfone, protected amine, protected hydrazide, thiol, protected thiol, carboxylic acid, protected carboxylic acid, isocyanate, isothiocyanate, maleimide, vinylsulfone, dithiopyridine, vinylpyridine, iodoacetamide, epoxide, glyoxals, diones, mesylates, tosylates, and tresylate.

36. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 31, wherein said reacting step is conducted in an organic solvent.

37. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 36, wherein the organic solvent is selected from the group consisting of methylene chloride, chloroform, acetonitrile, tetrahydrofuran, dimethylformamide, dimethyl sulfoxide, and mixtures thereof.

38. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 31, wherein said reacting step is conducted in the presence of a base.

39. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 38, wherein the base is selected from the group consisting of pyridine, dimethylaminopyridine, quinoline, trialkylamines, and mixtures thereof.

40. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 31, wherein the molar ratio of di(1-benzotriazolyl) carbonate to the water-soluble and non-peptidic polymer is about 30:1 or less.

41. (New) The method of Claim 31, wherein R is an amino acid.

42. (New) The method of Claim 31, wherein R is a polyol.

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43. (New) The method of Claim 42, wherein the polyol is selected from the group consisting of glycerol, pentaerythritol and sorbitol.